

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions of claims in the application.

1. (Original): A method of producing an elliptically polarizing plate comprising the steps of:
 - forming a first birefringent layer on a surface of a transparent protective film (T);
 - laminating a polarizer on a surface of the transparent protective film (T); and
 - forming a second birefringent layer by laminating a polymer film on a surface of the first birefringent layer, wherein:
 - the first birefringent layer and the polarizer are arranged on opposite sides of the transparent protective film (T);
 - the step of forming a first birefringent layer comprises the steps of:
 - applying an application liquid containing a liquid crystal material to a substrate subjected to alignment treatment;
 - forming a first birefringent layer on the substrate by treating the applied liquid crystal material at a temperature at which the liquid crystal material exhibits a liquid crystal phase;
 - and
 - transferring the first birefringent layer formed on the substrate to a surface of the transparent protective film (T); and
 - angles α and β satisfy a relationship represented by the following expression (1):

$$2\alpha+40^\circ < \beta < 2\alpha+50^\circ \quad \dots(1)$$

where, α represents an angle formed between a slow axis of the polarizer and a slow axis of the first birefringent layer, and β represents an angle formed between the absorption axis of the polarizer and a slow axis of the second birefringent layer.

2. (Original): The method according to claim 1, wherein:

the polarizer, the transparent protective film (T), the first birefringent layer formed on the substrate, and the polymer film used for forming the second birefringent layer are each a continuous film;

long sides of the polarizer, the transparent protective film (T), and the first birefringent layer formed on the substrate are continuously attached together to form a laminate including the polarizer, the transparent protective film (T), the first birefringent layer, and the substrate in the stated order;

the substrate is peeled off from the laminate; and

long sides of the laminate having the substrate peeled off and the polymer film used for forming the second birefringent layer are continuously attached together.

3. (Currently Amended): The method according to claim 1 [[or 2]], wherein the liquid crystal material comprises at least one of a liquid crystal monomer and a liquid crystal polymer.

Preliminary Amendment
Attorney Docket No. 062602

4. (Currently Amended): The method according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, wherein the first birefringent layer comprises a $\lambda/2$ plate.
5. (Currently Amended): The method according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 4~~ claim 1, wherein the second birefringent layer comprises a $\lambda/4$ plate.
6. (Currently Amended): The method according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 5~~ claim 1, wherein the substrate comprises a polyethylene terephthalate film.
7. (Currently Amended): The method according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 6~~ claim 1, wherein the polymer film comprises a stretched film.
8. (Currently Amended): An elliptically polarizing plate, which is produced through the method according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 7~~ claim 1.
9. (Original): An image display apparatus, which comprises the elliptically polarizing plate according to claim 8.
10. (New): The method according to claim 2, wherein the liquid crystal material comprises at least one of a liquid crystal monomer and a liquid crystal polymer.

11. (New): The method according to claim 2, wherein the first birefringent layer comprises a $\lambda/2$ plate.

12. (New): The method according to claim 3, wherein the first birefringent layer comprises a $\lambda/2$ plate.

13. (New): The method according to claim 2, wherein the second birefringent layer comprises a $\lambda/4$ plate.

14. (New): The method according to claim 3, wherein the second birefringent layer comprises a $\lambda/4$ plate.

15. (New): The method according to claim 4, wherein the second birefringent layer comprises a $\lambda/4$ plate.

16. (New): The method according to claim 2, wherein the substrate comprises a polyethylene terephthalate film.

17. (New): The method according to claim 3, wherein the substrate comprises a polyethylene terephthalate film.

18. (New): The method according to claim 4, wherein the substrate comprises a polyethylene terephthalate film.

19. (New): The method according to claim 5, wherein the substrate comprises a polyethylene terephthalate film.